4:Mickey E-5 (1940-?) 1947 AE5 Miao AE5

When they were a little older they watched animals as they grazed, cared for younger children, or did a smaller share of the same work as their elders. Even the very small girls were seen working on the pieces of the overpiece which employed the simplest and coarsest stitches. 857

Children were indulged as far as the family could afford to do so. The choicest bits were often given them. Mothers brought back little packages of these from a feast, or, if the child was present, they were put on a little dish which the child could take home and share, if he or she wished. Mothers brought back small chestnuts, berries, and azaleas when they went to the mountains for fuel. I have given an older woman something to eat, only to have a child snatch it out of her hand, and been given something myself for which the children have begged of me. A child seemed never to be without something to eat, tucked in a pocket or the front of its blouse. Parents almost never returned from market without a treat for them, and I was expected to do this, too. They even got into the way of demanding that it be the brown sugar cakes, of which they were very fond, and which were expensive, as no sugar is grown in this locality. Once the second nephew's little boy, Ssu-pao, asked me for sugar which I did not have. Next day when I was in their kitchen he threatened me with a chopping knife. His mother just laughed and said, "He wants sugar." His great aunt reproved him. However, mothers did most of the disciplining, which may account for the fact that a child almost always howled for his father when it was hurt, spanked, or wanted something very much. Tantrums were frequent, when a child screamed until it got what it wanted or until the parents were out of patience and gave it a slap. Some children went through a period of crying for little or no reason. Older folks just laughed at that. 862 865

Only a few of the boys, and almost never a girl, went to the school less than half a mile away, and then only for a few years (fig. 18, *d*). Still fewer went on to the higher school in Lung-li. On the whole they had little use for the education offered, for it was in Chinese, and like that in all Chinese schools, useful only to those who went into business or some profession. Most of the Miao 872 177

[49a]

39: Bernatzik--106 E-5 (1936-1937) 1947 AO1 Thailand
AKha A04
Miao AE5

/71 cont./

3. The Refractory Age

A M 865 157 The refractory age of the children among both the Akha and the Meau is very pronounced in both sexes at the age of from three to five. The defiant child, screaming, will strike out at adults and try to beat them or throw himself down on the ground, howling and kicking. The adults of both peoples do not pay much attention to these tantrums. Sometimes they speak to the children, but kindly, and try to divert them by giving them something to eat or the like. Such an attitude presumes, however, that the child's behavior is not a reaction to orders he has been given. If such is the case, the children are punished and, I was told, also beaten and forced to carry out the order in spite of their resistance. The parents, however, never complain about such outbursts of defiance on the part of the children and accept them as something to be taken for granted. In answer to my question as to whether the behavior of the child did not seem serious to them, the Meau told me: "This happens only with small children."

/72/ 4. Puberty

A M 881 [884] Neither among the Meau nor among the Akha does the beginning of puberty mean the slightest outward change in the normal life. Neither people has any ceremonial initiation in connection with it or an accompanying celebration of adulthood, since the latter, among them, does not coincide with the beginning of puberty (cf. the chapter, "Social Organization," section on "Organization of the Family"). Similarly, tattooing, masking, or circumcision in any form does not occur. Only the attainment of the age when one is capable of bearing arms plays a role (see the chapter, "Army and War").

A M [304]

A M [145] Depending on the nutritional level of the family, boys reach puberty at the age of fourteen to sixteen, girls somewhat earlier; in general this time point for both is considerably later than, for instance, for European Mediterranoid children. The behavior of the young people of the two tribes differs, however, as soon as they reach puberty.